

Washington State Patrol Media Release

Chief Lowell M. Porter



Captain Jeff DeVere
Government and Media Relations
(360) 753-5299 – office
(360) 753-5469 – fax
<http://www.wsp.wa.gov>

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**Contact: Toni Korneder, Criminal Records PIO 360-705-5125 5125 or Patty Jensen,
Fingerprint Manager 360- 570-5284**

Every Washington State County Now Connected With WSP through Live-Scan

The success stories keep coming in from all over the state to the Criminal Records Division of the Washington State Patrol, giving rave reviews on the use of live-scan:

"A Security Officer at JC Penney caught a subject shoplifting. The subject did not have identification and the live-scan officer was suspicious that she was not giving her true name. The subject was fingerprinted, the prints were searched, and a reply indicated her true name (was different than the name she gave at arrest) and she had a felony warrant out of Kennewick for escape from community custody."

"It has become a very valuable tool for me to use and has cut down time spent in identifying "John/Jane Doe's" in a hurry. Most recently I had a subject that identified himself to me as a dead person. Because of live-scan, and some helpful tech support, I was able to identify this subject as a wanted Child-molester from the State of Oregon within hours and confirmed on a \$77,000.00 felony rape warrant. This quick identification would not be possible with the old technology of having to take paper fingerprints and send them to Olympia for processing."

"Recently, we arrested a woman who would not identify herself to me, and from her statements was obviously lying to me about her identity. All I had to do was bring her up to the live-scan machine and tell her that as soon as you touch this machine, I will know who you are. She immediately broke down, and confessed to the person she really was. This live-scan tool is one of the most effective tools we have in our tool box for law-enforcement. I have also been impressed with the quickness of a subject's arrest being added to his criminal history record. In some cases it seems almost instantaneous. We have seen a lot of good things with live-s can."

The WSP, in partnership with every county across the state, has greatly enhanced the timeliness, completeness, and accessibility of criminal history record information to improve public safety. **Beginning in 2001 with Clallam, Grant, Kittitas and Whitman Counties and wrapping up recently in King County, now every county in the state is connected to the WSP's Identification and Criminal History Section, which is the state repository for fingerprint-based criminal history.** Since 1974, the Section has received arrest fingerprint cards through the mail from criminal justice agencies across the state. Now, real-time identification is available statewide, providing a rapid and significant benefit to citizen safety.

The live-scan to AFIS Connection Project connected existing and new live-scan fingerprinting systems in local criminal justice agencies throughout Washington to the state Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) and the criminal history system.

What this enhances for the law enforcement community and the public is timeliness - fingerprints and related arrest data are immediately transmitted to the state repository at the time of fingerprinting - fingerprint cards are not mailed. It provides real-time identification - positive fingerprint identification can be returned to the live-scan device from the state AFIS within **two hours. This reduces state identification response time to hours rather than weeks or months.**

The live-scan to AFIS Connection provides offender accountability - after identification, the associated arrest is immediately added to the state-level criminal history record. **Transcripts of criminal history record information (also known as "rap sheets") provided for background checks are more complete and timely.** After state identification is made, the transmission is forwarded to the FBI for an identification response from the FBI's Integrated AFIS (IAFIS) within two hours. Washington is one of thirty-eight states submitting their criminal arrests to the FBI via IAFIS.

To a business or individual wanting information this technology means receiving the most current criminal history possible. According to Washington state law, conviction criminal history record information can be released without restriction. As the central repository, the WSP receives an average of 240,000 background check requests per month. Around one-fourth (60,000) come through an Internet program, Washington Access to Criminal History (WATCH). Over 60% of those are to screen applicants who want to work with children, persons with developmental disabilities, and vulnerable adults.

In addition to protecting our vulnerable population, there are a variety of reasons a rap sheet is used. Those reasons may include a prosecutor using the information to make a criminal sentencing recommendation, a sheriff's office using it to determine whether or not an individual is entitled to have a concealed pistol license, a state agency needing it to decide if a person is eligible to sell insurance, real estate, or lottery tickets, and a local police department using it to issue a license to drive taxi or sell door to door. A private

citizen can request conviction data on any person for any reason – the minimum requirements are the name and date of birth of the subject and a \$10 processing fee.

Real-time identification means finding out an offender may be giving a false name and there are outstanding warrants. Timely response means having the information within hours (maybe minutes) rather than days (maybe months). Accessibility and availability means knowing whether or not a job applicant has a violent criminal past or is a registered sex offender. **The WSP has witnessed positive identifications being made within three minutes and local law enforcement agencies receiving responses back from the state and FBI before the offender was finished with the booking process.**

If you would like more information about the live-scan to AFIS Connection Project, WATCH, or the Identification and Criminal History Section, please contact us at (360) 705-5100 or visit the WSP website, <http://www.wa.gov/wsp/wsphome.htm>.

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